each level. The percentage of women representatives in Panchayats is as under:—

Panchayat Level	Number	Elected Representatives	Women Percentage
District Panchayats	537	11,825	41%
Intermediate Panchayats	6,097	1,10,070	43%
Village Panchayats	2,34,676	20,73,715	40%

(c) and (d) The information is being obtained from the States and would be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

Panchayati Raj meets

3556. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are organising Panchayati Raj meets all over the country;

(b) if so, the details of such meet organised so far;

(c) the expenditure incurred for this purpose since the present dispensation took over charge; and

(d) what are the major findings of these conferences?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj was set up on 27 May 2004. After the Ministry was set up, a Conference of Chief Ministers and State Ministers in charge of rural development and Panchayati Raj on "Poverty Alleviation and Rural Prosperity through Panchayati Raj" was organized in New Delhi on 29-30 June 2004, jointly by the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. Issues relating to effective implementation of Part IX and IX A of the Constitution on Panchayati Raj were tabled as agenda for discussions by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. In this Conference, a decision was taken to hold seven Round Table Conferences to formulate a draft action plan towards achieving the objective of strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions to enable them to emerge as institutions of self-government for the planning and implementation of programmes of economic development and social justice as envisioned in the Constitution.

Ministry of Panchayati Raj convened seven Round Table Meetings with the State Ministers in charge of Panchayati Raj between July, 2004 and December, 2004. A set of 150 action points were evolved by consensus and adopted unanimously at the conclusion of the last Round Table in Jaipur in December, 2004. Consultative mechanisms have been set up by the Government of India and State Governments to follow up the Round Table Conferences which comprise a Council of State Ministers of Panchayati Raj under the Chairmanship of the Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and a Committee of Chief Secretaries of States and State Panchayati Raj Secretaries under the Chairmanship of the Union Secretary (Panchayati Raj).

(b) to (d) Details of the various meets/conferences are as follows:

Meet/ Conference	Date	Location	Findings and points of discussion
1	2	3	4
First Round Table	24th and 25th July, 2004	Kolkata	Effective Devolution comprising functions, functionaries and finances as well as Gram Sabhas
Second Round Table	28th and 29th August, 2004	Mysore	Planning and implementation including the question of parallel bodies, Rural Business Hubs
Third Round Table	23rd and 24th September, 2004	Raipur	Reservations in Panchayati Raj comprising Scheduled Tribes (including implementation of PESA), Scheduled Castes and Women.
Fourth Round Table	7th and 8th October, 2004	Chandigarh	Panchayati Raj in Union Territories and Panchayati Raj Jurisprudence
Fifth Round Table	28th and 29th October, 2004	Srinagar	Annual Reports on the State of the Panchayats (including preparation of a Devolution Index)
Sixth Round Table	27th and 28th November, 2004	Guwahati	Panchayati Raj elections and audit
Seventh Round Table	17th, 18th and 19th December, 2004	Jaipur	Capacity building and training of Panchayati Raj Institutions, IT enabled e-Governance for Panchayats
Meeting of Council of	5th and 6th August, 2005	Kochi, Kerala	Progress on activity mapping was reviewed, which should have

1	2	3	4
State Ministers of Panchayati Raj.			been completed by the States by 31st March, 2005 as per First Round Table Conference. A joint statement of conclusion was signed at the end of the meeting regarding fixation of milestones in activity mapping, training programmes for Panchayat representatives as well as officials of line departments to sensitize them to the scope and implications of devolution, creation of Panchayat Sector in State Budgets to operationalise the transfer of schemes to Panchayats by 2006-2007.
Meetings of the Committee of Chief Secretaries and State Secretaries of Panchayati Raj	Five review meetings held on 11th April, 2005, 29th June, 2005, 9th September, 2005, 18th November, 2005 and 18th April, 2006	All meetings held in New Delhi	In the five meetings interaction with States have taken place on the status of various aspects of strengthening the system, such as devolution of funds, functions and functionaries, activity mapping, constitution of District Planning Committees (DPC), implementation of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA), capacity building and IT enabled e-governance.
Conference on the State of Panchayats and the Way Forward	16th to 18th December, 2005	New Delhi	A brainstorming exercise of research scholars, activists, functionaries and elected representatives of Panchayats for discussing all aspects of Panchayati Raj in India, including the measures to strengthen Panchayati Raj and to take it forward.
Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan	23rd and 24th April, 2006	Udaipur, Rajasthan	A movement funded and seeded by Ministry of Panchayati Raj, but to be wholly managed by Elected Women Representatives of Panchayats (EWRP), to set up

1	2	3	4
			their State level organizations. In the Conference of Udaipur, subject of greater and more substantive empowerment of women representatives was discussed and a charter of demand was finalized which is slated to be discussed and disseminated in divisional level meetings of Elected Women Representatives of Panchayats.

In addition to the above, several other meetings and workshops were organized on the issues ranging from promotion of bio-fuels, implementation of Jan Kerosene Pariyojana, setting up of Rural Business Hubs, etc.. Particular mention needs must be made of the National Presentation on Rural Business Hubs (RBH) in November 2004 to which nearly a thousand Panchayati Raj representatives were invited from all over the country and to which, as per the records of the Confederation of Indian Industry, approximately 250 representatives of business houses also attended.

The expenditure under the Head "Conferences, Seminars and Workshops, etc." from the creation of this Ministry on 27th May, 2004 has been as follows:

Year 2004-2005 — Rs. 96 Lakhs

Year 2005-2006 — Rs. 135.72 Lakhs

It may please be noted that host State Governments and (in the case of RBH) the Confederation of Indian Industry have substantially contributed to the organization of these meetings.

Gram Sabhas

3557. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to recommend to the State Government any changes in the matter of holdings Gram Sabhas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and